



# NEW BEDFORD FISHING HERITAGE CENTER

Date of Interview December 14, 2016

## Couto, Jose ~ Oral History Interview

Madeleine Hall-Arber

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## **Background**

**Name of person interviewed:** Jose Couto [JC]

### **Facts about this person:**

Age 58

Sex Male

Occupation Manager at Ship Supply in New Bedford

Residence (Town where lives) New Bedford

Ethnic background (if known) Brazilian and Portuguese

**Interviewer:** Madeline Hall-Arber [MHA]

**Transcriber:** Amanda Peabody [AP]

**Interview location:** New Bedford at the Fishing Heritage Center

**Date of interview:** December 14, 2016

### **Key Words**

Scalping, oilers, ship supplies, New Bedford, Fairhaven, fishing, waterfront, Portuguese, immigrants, hardware, chains, nets, shackles, safety gear, bookkeeping

### **Abstract**

Jose Couto started working at New Bedford Ship Supply the year that he graduated from high school. He was hired initially because he had taken bookkeeping courses and was fluent in Portuguese, but since then has been promoted as a manager. In addition to bookkeeping, he deals with buying and stocking the store with supplies, often consulting with his customers to meet their needs. In this interview, Jose also discusses changes in the industry and his own experience.

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[00:00] Tape intro; Ship Supply was established in '34; guidance counselor suggested job at Ship Supply; started working there during '77; no other family members in fishing industry; worked as a baker; talked about immigrating to USA.

[5:03] Parent's occupations; list of items the store sells; store provides groceries; changes within industry and how it affected the store; price of scallops; change in numbers of employees; butcher and girl who stitches scalloping bags.

[10:10] More about scallop bags; limiting the size of bags; rundown of daily routine.

[14:57] Tax deduction on buying supplies; floatation devices; safety training with Rodney Avila; immigrants in fishing industry i.e. Latinos, Vietnamese, Mexicans, etc.

[20:11] Best years for the store; best years for the fishing industry; changes in fishing industry in terms of product consumption such as GPS's instead of nautical charts, light weight waterproof clothes instead of oilers etc.

[25:04] testing new products on customers; getting feedback from customers; skill set required for position; competition with Hercules, Luzo Fishing Gear, Bay Fuels, Reidar's manufacturing, BJ's, Shaw's, Market Basket

[29:54] Maintaining customer loyalty; hardest part of the job; best part of job; work hours.

[35:00] The future of the store; predictions about the fishing industry; some background about the store founder's charity.

[40:50] End of recording

[0:00]

Madeleine Hall-Arber: What I'm going to ask you to do is just uh, introduce yourself and say where we are and then-- just so I can test the sound.

Jose Couto: My name is Jose Couto, I'm the manager at New Bedford Ship Supply. I've worked here since 1977, started working here right out of high school as Portuguese-speaking book keeper because at that time there was quite a few Portuguese fishermen in the port and they needed some help dealing with them.

MHA: Okay, I'm going to give an official introduction just because that's part of the--

JC: Okay.

MHA: --Routine. This is an interview for the New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center funded by the Archie Green Fellowship from the Library of Congress. As part of this project we're interviewing shore side workers in the New Bedford/Fairhaven fishing industry to record their stories, document their skills and knowledge and better understand their important role in the fishing industry. The recording and transcript will become part of the permanent collection of the Library of Congress. I'm Madeleine Hall-Arber and today I'm speaking with--

JC: Jose Couto.

MHA: Jose Couto. Thank you. New Bedford Ship Supply in New Bedford and the time is 10 o'clock. Or 11 o'clock, sorry. All right so I'm going to take these off and just talk. Because it does seem to be picking up pretty well. So again if you don't mind go and repeat your introduction.

JC: Okay, my name is Jose Couto, I'm the manager here at New Bedford Ship Supply. I started working here in 1977 right out of high school. They needed somebody that could speak Portuguese and also-- and knowing something about bookkeeping and they contacted a high school; the high school sent my down here and I got the job, been here ever since. First I just started off as basically learning the business, doing bookkeeping, whatever they needed me to do. I learned the business quickly enough that they decided to make me manager when the manager left in 1991.

MHA: Now was this Harriet's family that owned it at that time?

JC: Yes. Harriet's uncle Ramus Tonnessen and his wife Sarah Tonnessen started the business in 1934 and they never had any children so Rasmus died in 1990, '91, I'm sorry. And Sarah died passed away in 2000 and they-- that's when Harriet inherited the business from her aunt.

MHA: Okay. So was-- let's see... were you from a fishing family?

JC: No.

MHA: No?

JC: I just-- I was-- the manager here called New Bedford High School and said, anybody that's graduating that speaks Portuguese and took bookkeeping in school-- so the-- what they call guidance counselor called me the day I was leaving school and said hey, this place is looking for someone, if you want to go down there and get an interview... I said sure. So, I came in and they liked me and I stuck.

MHA: What-- when you-- since it was your last day, what had you thought you might do?

JC: Well I still planned, at that time I had a job. I worked at a bakery, part-time and I was probably going to work there more hours. I was taking some night courses to maybe take some college courses but then I got this job that went by the wayside.

MHA: Sure. You-- did you grow up here?

JC: I was born in Brazil in 1958. We immigrated to here in 1965 and I've lived in New Bedford ever since. My parents are-- my mother is Brazilian, my father's Portuguese and they settled here-- at that time, was a very large Portuguese community. A lot of immigrants were coming here at that time.

MHA: Do you know what brought them here? What attracted them to New Bedford-- I mean besides there being a community?

JC: Well, you know-- because they were immigrants, they didn't have very much education and they knew they had opportunities here to get jobs and so forth. My mother's sister and her brother were already here, so they said come here, we can get you jobs and better themselves.

MHA: Sure. And what kind of jobs were they working?

[5:03]

JC: My mother worked in a shoe factory when she got here and my father used to work at a fish factory and then he went on to construction.

MHA: Okay. So... was the fish factory, was it one of those processing plants sort of thing?

JC: No, you know where Kyler Seafood is now?

MHA: Yeah.

JC: They had a plant there that made cat food. They'd take the left over fish or trash fish and they would grind it down and make-- I believe it was cat food. He didn't like it, he didn't stay there very long then he found a job in construction; he only worked there a couple of years.

MHA: So, can you tell me a little bit about the business here? What Ship Supply does?

JC: We supply the New Bedford Fishing fleet, New Bedford supplies for the fishing supplies like hardware, chains, nets, shackles, all those sort of things and we also supply them with groceries. We have a butcher on site that cuts meat and we order milk daily from a distributor, so the cooks will come in and put their order in. Let's say, if they're going tomorrow, they usually come in a day before or so, give us the order, we pack it all up, cut the meats and order the milk and bread and so forth and then we load it on the truck and we deliver it right to the boat. Same thing with the hardware, the captains will call and say, "I need a piece of chain" or "I need some shackles," we take the order, put it on the truck and bring it right to the boat.

MHA: So what kinds of changes have you seen over the years with changes in the industry? Good or bad, or both.

JC: Well, when I first started working here there was hardly-- there was only restrictions on size of net and size of steel rings for the scallopers but they could fish all they wanted. So scallopers would go out ten days, stay home five and do that year round. Draggers, the the ones that go for fish, would go out for 7 days, stay home 3 days and do the same cycle all year round. But now with the new restrictions by the government, a lot of these boats can't do that anymore. Like the draggers-- at one time, we probably had 150 boats, we probably have down to maybe 50 that are actually fishing. And the scallopers, now they're limited to like 30 days. Well, with the closed areas they probably fish basically 50- 60 days a year compared to probably 250 when they were without the restrictions. Of course everything's cut back. At one time we had 33 employees here, now we're down to 10. So it's... the restrictions have affected us quite a bit.

MHA: So from what I understand the scallopers do have a much higher income then they used to but because they're not going out as much it affects your business, right?

JC: right. Well, they have a higher income because the price of the scallops, back—you know, like, scallops are probably 2 to 3 dollars a pound, few years ago-- well quite a few years ago, right now they've had highs of 18 to 20 dollars a pound. It's not that high now, but it probably fluctuates on demand and the resources and so forth. But, the price is still probably around the 10-11 dollar price range so it doesn't take that much to— scallops to have a good pay. But that's-- if the price was very low, they would have a very hard time making a living at it.

MHA: So you said you have about 10 employees, so are you counting the butchers and...?

JC: Yeah we have-- one butcher-- we have two grocery guys that deliver the groceries. We have three that work in the office here and then we-- because we also take care of downstairs because we sell our fishing gear, that's all part of it-- I forgot to mention that we supply the gloves and oilers and knives for the fishermen. So we have three people that take care of that here and we have three other ones that work on the dock like delivering the hardware; we also sell steel wire for the boats to pull the drags and pull the nets. And we have one girl that stitches scallop bags.

MHA: Oh wow.

[10:10]

JC: Because when they process the scallops they shuck them out of the shell and they put them in these cotton bags and then ice them down in the hold so we make the bags for them to put the scallops in.

MHA: Does she work here or does she work at home and just deliver them to you?

JC: She lives in Fall River so we rent a space in Fall River where-- it's an old warehouse, where they have the guy that cuts the cloth into the certain size dimensions. So we have the cloth delivered to him, he cuts it for her, she sews it and then when she has a truckload, we go up there and pick it up.

MHA: Just out of curiosity, is the size prescribed now by regulation or is it just...

JC: The size of the bag? No, there's no--

MHA: because it used to be something about the count of--

JC: that was the count of the scallops.

MHA: Yeah but they-- they would have a 50lb bag I think and then depending on how many scallops were in there would you need to make the count enough for not, if I recall correctly?

JC: Yes that was back when they had-- there was 33 scallops per pound, they couldn't be any smaller.

MHA: Right.

JC: They couldn't-- they could be bigger, they could have 20 scallops per bag-- per pound but it couldn't be like a 40 or 50 scallop per bag-- per pound should I say. But the bag didn't matter because they would just--

MHA: they'd just weigh it out--

JC: Yeah, back then they used to use 40 pound bags. That was the norm. But then people started saying, oh I want to put more in the bag so they don't want to handle a lot of bags so they figured if they put another 10 or 15 pounds in a bag it'd be less bags for them to handle so they asked for bigger and bigger bags so now they probably average from 50 to 55 pounds per bag.

MHA: The poor lumpers.

JC: Yeah. Most of the time the machine-- the hoist pick that up for them and so forth. Yeah, but now they don't have a restriction on the size of the scallops, you can bring in-- well the customers, they like the bigger scallops. They pay premium for it like size 10 to a pound which are hard to find but it is-- you can bring in 40 count 50 count. The guys don't like that either because they're so small you have to-- they're more shucking involved to get a pound. They'd all rather work on 10-20 count. I mean the bigger scallops--

MHA: Sure. And I don't know if you made it down to the last-- I think it was the last Working Waterfront Festival, not this September, but the prior September-- somebody brought to the Heritage Center's tent a scallop that was-- it was either a full pound or a half pound I don't remember now and that was huge!

JC: Oh yeah.

MHA: It was really amazing.

JC: Well some of these areas where they have a-- what they call a closed areas with that restrictive from fishing in them-- and some of them were closed for so many years that the scallops just kept growing and growing, well probably some of them just died off from being of old age but that's where you get the very big scallops.

MHA: So, what is your typical day like?

JC: Oh my typical day, I come in the morning, I take care of downstairs, make sure we have-- it's all stocked with gloves-- you know, we have stock in the back, so I'll bring out stock for the front of the store oilers and gloves and knives, make sure we have plenty. And then I come up, come upstairs and I basically do the deposit for the day from the day before because we don't do it at the end of the day we just close everything out and then in the morning I'll do the figures and make the deposit to bring up to the bank later on. And then it's basically adding the bills up from the day before and then taking care of customers because they-- we have system where customers ring the doorbell and whoever's not busy will go down there and take care of them, so I have to go down sometimes to take care of customers. A lot of them just charge or pay credit card and pretty boring, but that's basically about it.



MHA: So the things like the supplies for the gear for the individual fishermen-- so the individual fishermen come in and buy their own gloves and things?

[14:57]

JC: Yes, they're responsible for their own supplies. The boats supplies the boat with the hardware to fish for the scallops but any boots, gloves, oilers, winter gear, they're responsible for it and—it's tax-deductible for them at the end of the year they can put it down that they spent x amount of dollars on hardware. More like a construction guy, he has to go out buy boots, to work, I'm sure that's probably tax deductible for him too, but he has to supply his own things.

MHA: How about a personal floatation devices? Do you supply those?

JC: Yes. We sell the survival suits.

MHA: Right.

JC: Those are mandatory on each boat.

MHA: Right.

JC: But as far as floatation devices, like... none of these guys wear it. They probably-- it's funny, it's the most dangerous job in the world, but they have very little restrictions on what they have to wear other than having a survival suit, that's all they have because the way they work these days, I think to be having a floatation device on them at all time like the Coast Guard wears, it's not practical. Probably it would help some if an accident happen where they can't get to their survival suit but it's... nobody thinks about that until something really does happen.

MHA: They are working on that, there are a couple of projects that are working on--

JC: --Having restrictions--

MHA: -- Redesigning the... PFDs, I guess, so that they're more comfortable for the people to wear. I know the lobster industry, in particular, they have a lot of men overboard actually, so they need something that they can use while working. So we'll let you know.

JC: Yeah, well they have some-- they even have some from-- Grunden's makes it, that's uh, suspenders that inflate if you go overboard. We've had them and they just sit here and I'm sorry to say that when that accident happens is then when everybody comes looking for it, oh you have this you have that. But week after that, everybody forgets about it. And people that buy them usually don't use them.

MHA: Yeah. Did you-- have you been-- are you familiar at all with the hands on safety training that Rodney Avila...?

JC: I've never gone to them but I've heard that they run them all the time-- how to-- they have tests on how to put on your survival suit, because timing is everything and jumping in the water so they know what they have to do. I know Rodney very well. I've known him for probably 30 or 40 years.

MHA: Yeah, you would. Um, if they have one sometime down here where it's convenient for you, you ought to go it's really interesting. I've been around the waterfront for a while, not that I fish, but anyway, it's just fascinating and I think that you would get a lot out of it from being in this business. So has there been a lot of change over-- that you've seen on the waterfront in terms of the people, the families, the community itself since all the regulations came in and that kind of thing?

JC: It's more like-- when we first started working-- when I first started working here there was a lot of Portuguese and Norwegians and now a lot of them-- their sons didn't really, I guess their fathers made enough money that they could go to school and get education and not have to go fishing. So I see more-- different type of people coming in like, not necessarily that their fathers were fishermen but, we have a lot of people from Maine that come down to fish. And we have a high influx of Latin Americans. At one time we had a lot of Orientals, we still have quite a few but--

MHA: Vietnamese or?

JC: Vietnamese—mostly, but like Latin Americans we have people from all over, from Mexico, Honduras, the Dominican, you name it because they're up here trying to make a living. That's probably the most influx of workers now.

MHA: But they're not necessarily people from fishing families, they just see an opportunity.

JC: Yes-- probably, you don't need an education to go fishing so they're probably that don't have a lot of skill that-- doing that-- or can take a lot of life at sea, it's not very easy trying to work when you're bouncing around all the time but I guess that's an opportunity for them to make good money and not have to have 4 or 5 years of college.

[20:11]

MHA: Yeah. Have you ever been out?

JC: No. I've been-- I would get sea sick because I've been out on boats, with friends that have sail boats or so forth. If I'm on deck, I'm fine, I go downstairs to use the head or something, and I come up and I'm-- I don't know where I'm at. So I don't think fishing would suit me very well.

MHA: So when you were here-- when you first started, there were-- the ports, they had a lot of unions active didn't they?

JC: They had one, the Seafarers' union. But as a matter of fact they even had a strike in 1985 I believe, that I was laid off for about a month or so. But since then, the unions aren't-- there's no unions. That—Seafarers' union is still on for people who have paid into it and they have a pension, as far as being strong in the fishing industry, there's no unions whatsoever.

MHA: So what do you think were the best years for both the company and for yourself?

JC: For the company it's probably like the early 2000-- like.... 2002 probably to 2010 that's-- as far as I'm-- was here, because they opened up the closed areas and boats were able to have a good catch on scallops. In the 90s they were struggling. A lot of people were behind in payments because there wasn't that much stock in the areas they could fish, because there were so many closed areas where they couldn't go in and there was-- the rest of the stuff was kind of depleted out. So once they opened those closed areas, now it gave the other areas a chance to rebound and it made a good cycle where everybody started making good money.

MHA: And have you noticed a change in technology?

JC: Oh yeah. Now, especially the GPS and now, even the government has what they call a black box GPS where they can track exactly where you are at all times, where before they just had charts. Before when we were selling charts, every day, we were selling nautical charts. Now you sell once in a blue moon, because they're regulated to have to have them on the boat but they don't use them because they all use the computers with the GPS. Computers have helped them quite a bit because they don't have to do-- check on the chart where they're at, they just punch a number in or just touch a button and boom. They know exactly where they're at.

MHA: So do you think that has affected people's success in fishing?

JC: I would say so. I've never been fishing so I can't say-- but I'm sure you don't have to know as much about being a captain with all of this technology because you have a lot of help, whereas before you had to know how to navigate by the buoys and so forth. Now it makes it a lot easier for them because, like I say, they just touch a button and they know exactly where they're at, plus they have autopilots and so forth.

MHA: So, do you find yourself here selling other equipment that you didn't sell in the past?

JC: Yes, that's changed also. Before everybody wore what they call oilers-- that's the rubber pants with the suspenders and the bib. Now a lot of guys, they like to go light, they wear waterproof pants and they don't -- and they use aprons instead of using the big overalls especially in the summertime. They all use like a light-weight gear bre-- what they call-- Grunden makes

them breathable waterproof pants and jackets. They're lightweight, because the other stuff is kind of heavy and it weighs you down. It makes you a little more tired than you already are because they work a lot of hours and they don't get much rest when they're out fishing.

MHA: Right. Fish while they can. Few days--

JC: Yeah that's probably the biggest change for me is on the gear that they use. They go a lot lighter weight.

[25:04]

MHA: So how do you-- do you have trade shows or where you find out what the new gear is, know what to stock, or do people ask you for things?

JC: Well most of the times the companies will send a salesperson and they'll say, well we have new... you want to try it? So I'll say okay, that looks like stuff they'll buy, or try a couple, then I would have the customers, hey, do you think this will work for you? Would you buy it? Would you wear it? Or sometimes they'll even give me samples and I'll say, here take this, try it out, see what you think of it. Then once they tell me, oh yeah, that was great, I loved it, or I hated it. So I basically buy stuff on what they tell me works for them because they have to use it if-- I'm not going to force something on them that they're not going to use because they're not going to buy it. So that's what I base most of my products that I buy on.

MHA: So do you have certain people that you tend to go to with new things or...

JC: Oh, well some guys, you might give them a new pair of gloves-- here try these and let me know how they work out, then you never hear from them and then you ask them about it-- oh yeah... I don't remember. So like... there's certain people that I know of that will come back and tell me so I try to use them, you know, the ones I can rely on.

MHA: That makes sense.

JC: Yeah I guess you-- trial and error, you find out which ones will be helpful to you or not. And sometimes they'll see something in another store and they'll say hey, I got this and it really works for me, and I'll say okay, I'll bring some in. There's one guy, he was from Maine and he loved Shock Doctor insoles. He goes, Joe, I have to go-- I forgot where he bought them at, he told me, but he goes, get these, everybody will buy them. Sure enough, they were expensive but people like them because you put them in your boot and they're very comfortable.

MHA: Good to know. So I know that you have bookkeeping knowledge but what other-- and obviously people skills-- what other kinds of skills or knowledge do you think a person in your position really should have?

JC: Well like I say you've got to be able to listen to your customers and-- so they can tell and not-- get what they want and need. And, obviously I have to speak Portuguese. That's how I got the job, there's still quite a bit of Portuguese fishermen and like a lot of Spanish guys, Portuguese and Spanish are not exact but they're similar. So you can communicate with them a little bit. Other than that...

MHA: Who do you consider your biggest competitor here?

JC: As far as?

MHA: Ship supplies, I mean is there anything-- any other business in the-- in New Bedford that you-- or Fairhaven that you consider challenging your position here?

JC: Oh, there's quite a few as far as hardware. You have Hercules down the street that sells stuff, you have Luzo Fishing Gear, Luzo Oil that sells things, Skip's Marine, Bay Fuels, but not so much, and you have Reidar's Manufacturing. They all sell hardware. And as far as the grocery department, you have a lot of competition from guys that like-- they have their wives go shopping for them because we can't compete with a BJ's or Shaw's or Market Basket so they'll have their wives, they'll give their wives their list and they go shopping for them so we don't do as many on groceries as we once did. And as far as the hardware-- the crew stuff downstairs, there's also quite a few places that sell that, there's Lighthouse Marine, there's Euro Ship Store in Fairhaven, Luzo's again, they also sell stuff for the men and Hercules, and Bay Fuels. So there are-- most of those have-- sell boat things.

MHA: So how do you make Ship Supplies stand out?

[29:54]

JC: Well-- competitive pricing, and getting what the guys need, what they want to wear and so forth. And we have to be flexible on what they-- there's always change and there's always—we want to try this or try that so we have to be flexible to experiment with different things to keep the customer happy because nobody's forcing them to come here and buy stuff. So we have to be nice to them, courteous and have what they need and want.

MHA: So do you think that there are certain boats that tend to come here and certain boats that goes to Luzo's-- Luzo's is also Portuguese-speaking, right?

JC: Yes.

MHA: And... Bay Fuels-- are there certain categories of people-- or does it just happen to be a tradition that a certain boat will come to you as opposed to somebody else?

JC: Well like-- for the boat itself, we have a lot of customers have been coming here for years because we've been here the longest. But they move around-- they might have something a little cheaper than we do or so forth and like Luzo also sells fuel oil, so some of the customers that buy fuel oil they'll say hey, while your here bringing your fuel we can bring you some chain, too so they probably get some of those customers. As far as the crew-- like a scalloper will have 7 guys who might have 3 or 4 that come to us and 2 or 3 that go someplace else or sometimes we might have one that comes to us and the other 6 goes someplace else. It's all their preference.

MHA: And when the company changed hands, well when Harriet inherited it-- was there any difference in the way things were organized in the business or did it just continue on as before?

JC: No, it was just like nothing had happened.

MHA: Does Harriet spend any time here?

JC: She'll come in... Not very often but she'll come in every couple of weeks or so, spend some time, see what's going on and so forth. But she has-- she spends a lot of time going to these fishing meetings because there's always a meeting going on about different regulations and so forth. She spends most of her time covering that. That's her job.

MHA: Okay, let's see... what is the hardest part of your job?

JC: The hardest... sometimes biting my lip with some of the customers, probably. You know, I like the... well, no sometimes-- nothing's perfect, sometimes they get you upset for certain situations and you're like-- you'd really like letting them know, but sometimes you really have to bite your lip so you don't lose all your customers. That's probably the hardest part. The other stuff is not too bad.

MHA: And what do you like best?

JC: What I like best? I probably like dealing with the customers too because you make a friendship with some, you talk about certain things and so forth. That's probably the best because you have a lot of people coming in, different backgrounds and so forth. That's probably the best part too. Dealing with them and not dealing with them.

MHA: Best and worst. And what kinds of hours do you work?

JC: Oh, we open at 7 and we close at 4:30 and-- me and the other guy, we rotate every other day, I'll go home at 3:30 and he goes home at at 3:30-- so I'll stay until 4:30 and he'll go at 3:30. If you want to make a doctor appointment or something or a dentist appointment I always make it for that day that I know I'm going home early. And we work on Saturday mornings from 7-11:30. So we're here quite a bit.



MHA: Yeah.

JC: But you know on the service industry, you have to be there when the people need you.

[34:57]

MHA: So do you-- are there any associations that-- professional associations that people in your business belong to normally?

JC: I don't.

MHA: Just curious. And when the-- when there were more unions here, was the shop ever--

JC: A union shop? No.

MHA: Do you have any children in the fishing industry?

JC: No, I don't have any children.

MHA: Okay and how about-- what do you see as the future? Are you mentoring anybody to take your place eventually when you decide to retire?

JC: Oh yeah, that guy that sits here, Pete, he's like 15 years younger than me so he'll be-- like he knows most of what everything I do because I also order all the material for the shop and I order the stuff for downstairs, so if I wasn't here, he can do that. It would just be up to him later on to decide what things he wants to buy or not buy.

MHA: So he has to learn how to communicate with the customers too.

JC: Yeah, he does a good job of that.

MHA: And what about you; you see a portion of the industry pretty frequently so what do you think the future holds because you were mentioning that a lot of the people have made enough money so that their kids are not going into fishing. How about the future-- do you see fishing continuing in the Portuguese community or...

JC: Well, that's all up to the government. The way they're restricting and some of the things going on-- now they're talking about wind farms out in the fishing grounds. That could devastate everything. Who knows once they start digging those-- they have to dig holes to put pylons in, they could disrupt the whole industry. Who knows? Hopefully, everything goes on as it has because the fish and the scallops have a way of rebounding or sometimes they have slack years where there's not too much around and then the next year, boom they're right back. It's just controlling the areas that they fish, but if you start putting things out on the ocean that don't

belong there, who knows what's going to happen. They could destroy the whole thing. It's like, put some oil wells out there, or whatever, that was back in the 70s they were thinking about that but... hopefully that-- nothing goes wrong because it's-- a lot of people like to eat scallops and fish and this is one of the areas that probably has an abundance of it, it's been feeding the world for a long, long time now. I hope it continues that way but I can't tell the future.

MHA: So if you had-- have you ever been to the Heritage Center?

JC: I've been trying to get there, but every time, something comes up.

MHA: Well it does have limited hours, it's Thursday through Sunday so, but I would highly recommend it, it's really kind of fun.

JC: Oh yeah, my girlfriend has a couple of grandkids so we're going to probably make a-- take them one of these days.

MHA: Oh good.

JC: It's open Sundays you said.

MHA: Yes it is.

JC: Okay.

MHA: So if you were to envision the... somebody talking about this industry, your industry, Ship Supply, how would you like it to be portrayed in a museum? Any thoughts on that?

JC: I would have to say that... as this company and-- like a lot of people knew Rasmus, helped a lot of people get us started fishing. He would take a chance on a guy buying a boat, letting them charge stuff hoping that guy would pay him after that guy made a few trips. And there's quite a few boats that never made it and he got stuck holding the bill for a lot of them, but he would always be there to help them to get started and I think that's probably one of the legacies from this company because if you had talked to older people that knew him, would know him-- would tell you the same thing. And we do the same thing now. There's always people buying boats and we give them credit to get them started, but back then it was a lot harder for these guys to make a go of it. Whereas now it's like-- it's more-- people know more about the fishing industry and there's less chance of them not succeeding, as before there was quite a few failures.

MHA: And is there anything that you can think of that I haven't asked that you think I should have asked or that you'd like to tell me apart from that-- that was fascinating. I remember now hearing that he had helped—or that he and his wife had helped people.



JC: I sometimes find some old papers, like I.O.U.'s and so forth, that he never collected on. No, but I think that about covers it.

MHA: Well I really appreciate your time; I really enjoyed talking to you a great deal.

JC: Okay.

[40:50] End of recording